

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A fracture fixation system comprising a buttress member adapted for fracture fixation and a fixation washer for securing the buttress member to a stable bone fragment on one side of a bone fracture, said buttress member comprising a wire element having a U-shaped bend with opposite legs extending from the U-shaped bend, said legs having distal ends with portions bent away from the legs and adapted for buttressing a surface of an unstable bone fragment on an opposite side of the fracture, said fixation washer comprising a body for lying on the wire element and including a plurality of tabs projecting from said body for engaging said legs, said body having a hole for passage therethrough of a bone screw adapted to secure the washer and the underlying wire element to said stable bone fragment, and means on said body of the washer for applying a counter-bearing pressure on one of the legs of the wire element in opposition to said tabs engaging said one leg to oppose rotation of the washer and slippage of the washer from said legs when the bone screw is turned for engagement in the stable fragment.

2. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 1, wherein said means for applying counter-bearing pressure to oppose rotation of the washer comprises a further tab on said washer, said plurality of tabs engaging the legs of the wire element on one side of said legs and said further tab engaging said one leg of the wire element on an opposite side of said one leg.

3. (Previously Presented) The fracture fixation system of claim 2, wherein said further tab has a flexibility and is spaced from said plurality of tabs to provide a snap-engagement of said tabs with said one leg of the wire element.

4. (Previously Presented) The fracture fixation system of claim 1, wherein said washer includes a projection extending lengthwise between the legs of the wire element, said projection having a second hole for passage therethrough of a fixation element adapted to penetrate into said unstable bone fragment.

5. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 4, wherein said fixation element

and said bent portions at said distal ends of said legs of the wire element extend at an angle relative to one another.

6. (Original) A fracture fixation system comprising a buttress member adapted for fracture fixation and a fixation washer for securing the buttress member to a stable bone fragment on one side of a bone fracture, said buttress member comprising a wire element having a U-shaped bend with opposite legs extending from the U-shaped bend, said legs having distal ends with portions bent away from the legs and adapted for buttressing a surface of an unstable bone fragment on an opposite side of the fracture, said fixation washer comprising a body for lying on the wire element and including a plurality of tabs projecting from said body for engaging said legs, said body having a hole for passage therethrough of a bone screw adapted to secure the washer and the underlying wire element to said stable bone fragment, said legs of said wire element being spaced from one another and having a reduced spacing at said U-shaped bend as compared to the spacing of the legs at the distal ends thereof.

7. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 6, wherein said legs are of equal length.

8. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 6, wherein said legs are of unequal length.

9. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 6, wherein the bent portions at the distal ends of the legs are unequal in length.

10. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 6, wherein said legs have a length from the U-shaped bend to said distal ends which are unequal.

11. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 6, wherein one of said legs of the wire element is straight and the other leg has a bend therein to define first and second portions in which the legs are parallel and spaced apart and wherein the spacing between the legs in the first portion is less than the spacing between the legs in the second portion.

12. (Original) A fracture fixation system comprising a buttress member adapted for fracture fixation and a fixation washer for securing the buttress member to a first bone fragment on one side of a bone fracture, said buttress member comprising a wire element having a U-shaped bend with opposite legs extending from the U-shaped bend, said legs having distal ends with portions bent away from the legs and adapted for buttressing a surface of a second bone fragment on an opposite side of the fracture, said fixation washer comprising a body for lying on the wire element and including a plurality of tabs projecting from said body for engaging said legs, said body having a hole for passage therethrough of a bone screw adapted to secure the washer and the underlying wire element to said first bone fragment, and means on said body of the washer for applying a counter-bearing pressure on one of the legs of the wire element to oppose rotation of the washer when the bone screw is turned for engagement in the first bone fragment, said legs of said wire element being spaced from one another and having a reduced spacing at said U-shaped bend as compared to the spacing of the legs of the wire element at the distal ends thereof.

13. (Previously Presented) A fixation washer for securing a wire form to a bone, said fixation washer comprising a body having side edges extending to opposite sides of the wire form, a plurality of tabs extending from said body for engaging the opposite sides of said wire form, said body having a hole between said side edges for passage therethrough of a bone screw adapted to secure the washer to the bone and a further tab on said body at a position for engaging the wire form opposite to said at least one of said plurality of tabs in counter-bearing opposition to said at least one of said plurality of tabs to prevent rotation of the washer and slippage of the washer from said wire form as the bone screw is turned for engagement in the bone.

14. (Previously Presented) The fixation washer of claim 13, wherein said further tab is flexible and spaced from said at least one of said plurality of tabs to snap-engage the wire form and be resiliently secured therewith.

15. (Original) The fixation washer of claim 14, wherein said further tab is inclined relative to said at least one of said plurality of tabs.

16. (Original) The fixation washer of claim 15, wherein said further tab is bendable to adapt inclination thereof relative to said at least one of said plurality of tabs.

17. (Original) The fixation washer of claim 15, wherein said at least one of said plurality of tabs comprise two tabs which are spaced apart from one another, said further tab being disposed at a position between said two tabs.

18. (Original) The fixation washer of claim 16, wherein all of said tabs are bent from said body.

19. (Original) The fixation washer of claim 18, wherein two of said tabs are disposed at each of said side edges of said body.

20. (Original) The fixation washer of claim 15, wherein at least some of said tabs are curved to fit the opposite sides of the wire form.

21. (Original) The fixation washer of claim 15, wherein said tabs are bendable to conform to said opposite sides of said wire form.

22. (Original) The fixation washer of claim 13, wherein said body includes a second said hole for a second bone screw.

23. (Original) The fixation washer of claim 13, wherein said body has a width such that said plurality of tabs are adapted to engage wire elements of two wire forms adjacent to one another.

24. (Original) The fixation washer of claim 13, wherein said body is made of metal.

25. (Original) The fixation washer of claim 13, wherein said body is made of plastic.

26. (Original) The fixation washer of claim 13, wherein said body includes a projection

at an end edge of the body, said projection having a second hole for insertion therein of a fixation element adapted for penetrating a bone fragment of the bone.

27. (Previously Presented) A fracture fixation system comprising a buttress member adapted for fracture fixation and a fixation washer for securing the buttress member to a stable bone fragment on one side of a bone fracture, said buttress member comprising a wire element having a U-shaped bend with opposite legs extending from the U-shaped bend, said legs having distal ends with portions bent away from the legs and adapted for buttressing a surface of an unstable bone fragment on an opposite side of the fracture, said fixation washer comprising a body for lying on the wire element, said body having a first hole for passage therethrough of a bone screw adapted to secure the washer and the underlying wire element to said stable bone fragment, said body having a second hole longitudinally spaced from the first hole in a position for insertion of a fixation element adapted for being secured to the unstable bone fragment.

28. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 27, wherein said fixation element comprises a screw adapted for insertion into the unstable fragment of the bone.

29. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 27, wherein said fixation element comprises a post adapted for threaded engagement in the unstable fragment of the bone.

30. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 29, wherein said post has a threaded head and said second hole is threaded for threaded engagement by said threaded head of the post.

31. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 29, wherein said fixation element includes a portion adapted for buttressing the unstable bone fragment at an articulate surface thereof, said portions of the legs being adapted for buttressing the articulate surface, said portion of the fixation element and said portions of the legs extending at different angles with respect to the articulate surface.

32. (Previously Presented) The fracture fixation system of claim 31, wherein said portion of the fixation element and said portions of the wire element extend in opposite

directions of inclination.

33. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 27, wherein said second hole extends obliquely in said body of the washer.

34. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 27, wherein said fixation element is secured in said body by an expandible bearing in said second hole.

35. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 27, said second hole is located in a projection for guiding said fixation element for buttressing the articulate portion of the bone fragment.

36. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 35, wherein the second hole causes the fixation element to be angularly offset with respect to the buttressing portions of the legs of the wire element.

37. (Original) The fracture fixation system of claim 36, wherein the angular offset of the fixation element and the buttressing portions of the wire element are adapted to produce separate contact regions with the articulate portion of the bone fragment.

38. (Currently Amended) An offset volar buttress pin comprising a wire element having a U-shaped bend with opposite legs extending from the U-shaped bend, said opposite legs having distal ends at which the legs are bent away for buttressing a surface of the bone, said legs being spaced apart in a first region in proximity to said U-shaped bend at a distance which is ~~less~~ different from than the spacing of the legs in a second region in proximity to said distal ends.

39. (Original) The offset volar buttress pin of claim 38, wherein the legs extend parallel to one another in said first and second regions.

40. (Original) The offset volar buttress pin of claim 39, wherein one of said legs is bent outwardly in a direction away from the other of the legs to form a step separating the first and

second regions.

41. (Original) The offset volar buttress pin of claim 38, wherein said legs are of equal length.

42. (Original) The offset volar buttress pin of claim 38, wherein said legs are of unequal length.

43. (Original) The offset volar buttress pin of claim 38, wherein the bent portions at the distal ends of the legs are unequal in length.

44. (Currently Amended) An offset volar buttress pin comprising a wire element having a U-shaped bend with opposite legs extending from the U-shaped bend, said opposite legs having distal ends at which the legs are bent away for buttressing a surface of the bone, said legs being spaced apart in a first region in proximity to said U-shaped bend, wherein said legs have a length from the U-shaped bend to said distal ends which are unequal.

45. (Original) The offset volar buttress pin of claim 38, wherein one of said legs of the wire element is straight and the other leg has a bend therein to define first and second portions in which the legs are parallel and spaced apart and wherein the spacing between the legs in the first portion is less than the spacing between the legs in the second portion.

46. (Cancelled)

47. (Cancelled)

48. (Cancelled)

49. (Cancelled)

50. (Cancelled)

51. (Cancelled)

52. (Cancelled)

53. (Cancelled)

54. (Previously Presented) The fracture fixation system of claim 2, wherein said wire element has a round cross-section and said plurality of tabs and said further tab counter bear on opposite sides of said one leg.

55. (Previously Presented) The fixation washer of claim 13, wherein said further tab and said at least one of said plurality of tabs are positioned for engaging a round cross-section of the wire element on opposite sides of the wire element.

56. (Previously Presented) The fracture fixation system of claim 6, comprising a second buttress member adjacent to the first said buttressing member, said washer engaging one said leg of each of said first and second buttress members for securing said first and second buttress members to the stable bone fragment.

57. (Previously Presented) The fracture fixation system of claim 12, comprising a second buttress member adjacent to the first said buttressing member, said washer engaging one said leg of each of said first and second buttress members for securing said first and second buttress members to the first bone fragment.